

## Arizona Department of Education Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction Diane M. Douglas

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## Superintendent Douglas Applauds Schools for Doing Miraculous Work with Limited Financial Resources

(Phoenix, AZ – Feb. 27, 2015) – Superintendent of Public Instruction Diane Douglas today expressed her appreciation for the work of Arizona's public charter and traditional public schools after the release of the Arizona Auditor General's Fiscal Year 2014 School District Spending Report. The report shows that Arizona lags behind the national average for per-pupil spending in almost every category.

"It is time to stop looking at percentages when we evaluate our schools and their spending," said Superintendent Douglas. "Schools spend dollars, not percentages. I find it inspiring that our schools have continued to strive for excellence given the restraints placed upon them by limited budgets. The dollar-to-dollar comparisons of Arizona expenditures to national averages are truly sobering when we consider how much less our schools have to work with. Our schools are doing a miraculous job in comparison."

The Superintendent also pointed out that the Arizona numbers are based on 2014, while the most current numbers to compare nationally are from 2012. "If you take into account the increases made by other states during the last two years, there is an even more stark contrast. For instance, Arizona is a large state so transportation costs per pupil are much higher than in Rhode Island, Massachusetts or other more compact regions."

Table 1: Comparison of Arizona and U.S. per pupil spending by operational area Fiscal years 2014 (Arizona) and 2012 (U.S.)

	State average 2014	National average 2012
Total	\$7,578	\$10,667
Classroom dollars Nonclassroom dollars	4,073	6,495
Administration	757	1,160
Plant operations	923	1,008
Food service	405	429
Transportation	373	464
Student support	600	594
Instruction support	447	517

Source: Auditor General staff analysis of fiscal year 2014 districtreported accounting data, Arizona Department of Education student membership data, and National Center for Education Statistics Revenues and Expenditures for Public Elementary and

Secondary Education: School Year 2011-12, January 2015.